

towards social change, and even towards
 Socialist thinking
 Charles Booth was, by chosen profession, a
 great captain
 of industry, a shipowner and much besides, by
 conviction
 he was a Comtist His cousin, who admired
 and enjoyed
 him greatly, saw him as

"within my circle of friends, perhaps the most
 perfect embodi-
 ment of the union of faith in the scientific
 method with
 the transference of emotion of self-sacrificing
 service from God
 to man",

the embodiment in other words, of what she
 calls the
 "Victorian time-spirit" In him, this type
 w^as dashed
 with a genuine originality He had a passion for
 asking
 questions, of himself and others Thus, when
 the "con-
 dition of the people " was a phrase on every lip,
 he retorted
 "Who are they⁹ Who are the people of
 England? How
 do they live? What are they like? What do
 they care
 for?" Answers to his questions, fundamental
 as they
 were, were not forthcoming He determined
 to supply
 them It was an enterprise that roused all
 Beatrice's
 enthusiasm, she longed to work with him
 but in view
 of her tie to her father, it seemed
 impossible In the
 autumn of 1886, however, it became plain that
 Mr Potter's
 illness had passed out of the acute into a
 stationary stage,
 her married sisters, therefore, insisted that
 they should,
 in turns, take her place at his side, so
 releasing her for
 at least four clear months in the year At
 once, she sped
 up to London to see Charles Booth, who, so
 far, had
 been working single-handed, and he, in view

of her
knowledge of the Docks area, put her in
charge of that
section of his survey After spending the winter
with her
father at Bournemouth, in March 1887 she
went up to Lon-
don, betook herself to the headquarters of the
Quakers at
Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, and settled
down to work
The work was hard, and in its nature
depressing but